

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

NICHOLS SHARON,

Plaintiff,

v.

COSTCO WHOLESALE CORPORATION,

Defendant.

Case No.: 2:24-cv-03569-DJC-JDP

**ORDER REFERRING CASE TO VDRP**

On December 19, 2024, Defendant removed this personal injury action to the United States District Court, Eastern District of California under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1332(a) and 1446(b)(3). ECF No. 1. Defendant previously filed an answer to the complaint in state court. *Id.*

In the interest of avoiding the accumulation of fees and costs through potentially unnecessary discovery and motion practice, and to allow the parties sufficient time to pursue an early informal resolution of this matter, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. This action is STAYED for except as set forth herein.
2. All previously set deadlines and hearings are VACATED pending further order of the court.
3. If parties have not already made all initial disclosures required by Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(a)(1), they must do so within fourteen (14) days of this order.

1           4.     The parties are DIRECTED to promptly meet and confer to discuss  
2 settlement of this action. Settlement discussions require focus and preparation and  
3 should involve the attorneys who will try the case and the person or persons having  
4 full authority to negotiate and settle the case on any terms. Plaintiff should initiate  
5 settlement discussions by providing a written itemization of damages and a  
6 meaningful settlement demand that includes an explanation of why the demand is  
7 appropriate. Defendant should respond with an acceptance of the offer or with a  
8 meaningful counteroffer, and which includes an explanation of why the counteroffer is  
9 reasonable. The parties should continue in this way until they reach settlement or  
10 have exhausted informal settlement efforts.

11           3.     If the parties have not been able to informally reach a settlement within  
12 forty-five (45) days, the parties shall thereafter initiate participation in the court's  
13 Voluntary Dispute Resolution Program ("VDRP") by contacting the court's VDRP  
14 administrator, Sujean Park, at (916) 930-4278 or [SPark@caed.uscourts.gov](mailto:SPark@caed.uscourts.gov), and file a  
15 notice on the court's docket stating they have contacted the VDRP administrator.<sup>1</sup>

16           4.     The parties shall carefully review and comply with E.D. Cal. L.R. 271,  
17 which outlines the specifications and requirements of the VDRP.

18           5.     No later than fourteen (14) days after completion of the VDRP session,  
19 the parties shall jointly file their VDRP Completion Report, consistent with E.D. Cal. L.R.  
20 271(o).

21           IT IS SO ORDERED.

22  
23 Dated: January 29, 2025

/s/ Daniel J. Calabretta

24 THE HONORABLE DANIEL J. CALABRETTA  
25 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

26 <sup>1</sup> The parties are expected to make good faith efforts to timely and fully exhaust informal settlement  
27 efforts prior to initiating participation in the VDRP. The court will look with disfavor upon parties stalling  
28 or failing to participate in the above-mentioned initial informal discussions, and/or failing to participate  
in the VDRP program in good faith.